said software, said secret key information being the secret key of a person using the information input device;

        c) means for using said software to generate a digital signature based upon the first information and the secret key information; and

        d) means for outputting said first information containing said digital signature,

        whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

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        6.   (three times amended) An information input device comprising:

        a) means for inputting first information;

        b) means for compressing said first information;

        c) means for receiving secret key information and software for generating a digital signature from an external device and for storing said received secret key information and said software, said secret key information being the secret key of a person using the information input device;

        d) means for using said software to generate a distinguishing information based on the secret information and the information compressed by said compressing means and

        e) means for outputting said first information containing said digital signature,

        wherein said external device stores the secret key corresponding to a registered user; and

        whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

10. (three times amended) An image input apparatus comprising:

a) an image input device for inputting said image data;

b) means for receiving secret key information and software for generating a digital signature based on said secret key information from an external device;

c) a memory for storing said software and said secret key information which is received from said external device, said secret key information being the secret key of a person using the information input device;

d) an operation device for carrying out an operation using said software, the image data and the secret information to produce a digital signature; and

e) means for outputting said first information containing said digital signature,

whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

14. (three times amended) In an image input system:

a) a first terminal device for inputting image data;

b) a second terminal device for receiving secret key information from an external device and an algorithm for generating a digital signature, said second terminal device having a memory for storing said received secret key information, said secret key information being information which corresponds to a user;

c) an operator for executing a command based on said algorithm for generating a digital signature by using the image data and the secret key information; and

d) means for outputting said first information containing said digital signature,

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whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

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26. (three times amended) An information input method comprising:

a) a step of inputting first information into an information input device;

b) a step of receiving secret key information and software for generating a digital signature from an external device and for storing the received secret key information and said software, said secret key information being the secret key of a person using the information input device;

c) a step of using said software to generate a digital signature based upon the first information and the received secret key information; and

d) outputting said first information containing said digital signature,

whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

27. (three times amended) A computer readable memory programmed to cooperate with a data processor and an information input unit to carry out:

(a) a step of inputting first information into an information input device;

(b) a step of receiving secret key information and software for generating a digital signature from an external device and storing the received secret key information and said software, said secret key information being the secret key of a person using the information input device;

(c) a step of using said software to generate a digital signature based upon the first information and the secret key information received from the external device; and

d) outputting said first information containing said digital signature,

whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

28. (new) An apparatus which is detachable to an information device comprising:

means for receiving digital data from the information device;

means for storing a secret key and software for generating a digital signature;

processing means for generating said digital signature based on said digital data, said secret key and said software; and

means for outputting the digital signature to the information device.

29. (new) An apparatus according to claim 28, wherein said apparatus is a mobile terminal device.

30. (new) A method for supplying a digital signature by use of apparatus which is detachable to an information device, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving digital data from the information device;

storing a secret key and software for generating a digital signature;

generating said digital signature based on said digital data, said secret key and said software; and

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